

SECURITY INFORMATION

ADDRESS OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS TO
THE DIRECTOR OF
PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD
WASHINGTON

4-3176

Noted by DCI-
REL - 8 July

July 7, 1953

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Allen W. Dulles,
Director of Central Intelligence.

SUBJECT: Exploitation of Communist BW Charges.

I would appreciate any views you might have on my proposal to use Professor Zirkle. The idea, roughly, is this: He is a well-known scholar on the subject of Soviet scholarly production in the field of science--both good and phony. If a man of his stature attacked this study as another one of a series of Soviet "phonies", it might have a desirable impact in the right quarters.

If you agree to the idea of our using Professor Zirkle, do you believe it is necessary for Sheff Edwards to effect clearance on him? The International Scientific Commission report, as you recall, is unclassified. I think I could handle this in an innocent sort of way without dragging in any classified material. Thanking you sincerely in advance for your views--Sincerely yours,

"Pete"

Horace S. Craig

Enclosure:

Memorandum of Conversation, July 6, 1953. Subject: State Department Exploitation of Communist BW Charges.

NSC review(s) completed.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD

~~DEPARTMENT OF STATE~~

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: July 6, 1953

SUBJECT: State Department Exploitation of Communist BW Charges.

PARTICIPANTS: Erasmus Kroman, P, Richard L. Sneider, UNA, State Department;
H. S. Craig and Wallace Irwin, Jr., PSB. W₁

COPIES TO: Participants

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This informal meeting was held in order to obtain background information on past State Department activity and present plans in connection with the BW issue. Dr. Craig opened by outlining the renewed interest of Ambassador Lodge, Mr. C. D. Jackson and Mr. Allen Dulles in this question, and noted that Mr. Dulles had suggested that the UN should be the main forum for continuing exploitation.

Mr. Kroman then reviewed the history of the BW effort as follows:

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Until early winter of 1953[?] a BW Working Group was active, under P area chairmanship, reporting to POC and then to PSB. [redacted] represented CIA at various times; no CIA scientist worked directly with the group but the scientific resources of the Agency [redacted] were sought by the Working Group beginning before the publication of the Report of the Communist "International Scientific Commission" (ISC). Defense was represented on the working group by Lee Hargus, OPI.

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After the ISC Report was published, Col. Arthur Long, an Army epidemiologist, studied the report for several weeks and submitted his analysis. His conclusion was that the report was a complete fabrication, but that very few of its particular items of scientific "evidence" could be demolished as such. Therefore, he concluded, the attack should be focused

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on the fallacious framework of logic underlying the whole report. He drew up a list of fallacies which was reviewed by a Committee of the National Academy of Science under the chairmanship of Dr. Bronk.

The NAS (Bronk) committee was originally formed at the instance of the State Department, working through Dr. Koepfli, State's Science Adviser. The committee is expected to disband within about a week. It has thus far accomplished very little of substance. After studying Col. Long's Report and other evidence, Dr. Bronk finally agreed reluctantly in February 1953 to draft a letter designed for dissemination in the free world scientific community. The letter followed the recommended "logical" approach of Col. Long but was pitched in an extremely low key--so much so as to be of dubious effect. The main points it made were that the testimony reported in the ISC Report had never been verified by the Commission either through observation or through experiments; that the report puts strained and improbable interpretations on the data reported; that conflicting statements in the Report remained unreconciled; and that there are gaps in the evidence. In any case, whether because of its pallid complexion or for other reasons, our delegation at the UN decided against using the letter.

State is still negotiating with a member of the National Academy of Science who has visited Korea, in an effort to persuade him to make an open endorsement of Col. Long's analysis.

Mr. Kloman noted in passing that the first Communist charges that the US had used BW--emanating from so-called scientists' and lawyers' groups--were comparatively clumsy and full of loopholes. We obtained, in fact, the text of a World Peace Council directive ordering that these first efforts be improved upon, and we exploited this document in the UN with some effect. This WPC directive was the origin of the mammoth ISC Report. The scientists who signed it, politics aside, are highly competent people, and their handiwork is difficult to attack except by the logical method.

On January 19, 1953, State sent a circular airgram, drafted by Mr. Kloman, to our embassies in all countries whose nationals were represented on the ISC. The effort was to get a refutation of the report from a multi-national group of scientists. Further, the airgram urged a strong counter-offensive (based both on the fallacies of the report and on the Communist refusal to admit scientific investigation on the spot) designed to expose the "big lie" technique and thus undermine Communist credibility on a broad front. State consulted the British Foreign Office in an effort to persuade them to lead off on this proposal. They were pleasant but did nothing. When the Seventh General Assembly reopened, State was willing to settle with the British for a refutation by British scientists alone--but again without results, presumably because of the prevailing peace-mongering atmosphere in the GA.

Mr. Kloman said that the reluctance of scientists, including the British, to engage in such efforts as these apparently stems from a

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simple distaste for engaging in "propaganda". Luckily there are a few exceptions. Mr. Kloman handed us copies of a pamphlet written by John Claws, reporter for the Birmingham (England) Post, with a comparatively strong foreword by the head of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. State has bought 2500 copies of this pamphlet; the British Foreign Office another 2500, and a joint distribution to British and US missions abroad is planned. (I asked Mr. Sneider whether distribution was also being made through USUN. He said he was not sure but would check.)

Mr. Sneider then continued with an account of action on this subject in the UN. The Security Council first took up the issue in July 1952, but the Russians vetoed a move for investigation. We then took up the question in the second part of the 7th GA (February and March), with two draft resolutions--a "strong" one condemning the charges and a somewhat milder one calling for an investigation. The delegation was instructed to guarantee at least 40 votes before putting any resolution to the test. They could count scarcely more than 20 for the condemnation, with the British and Arab-Asian bloc unwilling to vote for it. They therefore pressed the more modest investigation proposal and got 52 votes in favor--which they felt was an excellent showing in view of the fact that Vishinsky had just returned to New York from the funeral of Stalin and peace was breaking out all over. However, the proposed investigation was made contingent on willingness of the Communists to admit an on-the-spot commission. Since the Communists have never replied, no commission was ever appointed, and the matter rests there.

In debate, our GA tactic was to avoid a debate on the merits of the charges lest the Communists invade New York with various exhibits, flea circuses, etc. We did succeed, however, in getting some excellent speeches into the record, both ours and those of friendly delegations. These speeches have been made part of the standard IIA kit.

Whether all of this represents a US success or failure is obscure. Our missions abroad, Mr. Sneider said, report vehemently and almost unanimously that nobody except standard commie-liners takes the BW charges seriously. For instance, Embassy Rome reported that the Communist press had complained of a "conspiracy of silence" on the part of the Italian press; and an open poll in France last February seemed to show that the whole matter was being forgotten and that only about 7 percent (equivalent to CP membership) believed the charges. The Embassies add that continued US attacks on the subject will serve only to keep the charges alive, so they do not press the matter except when it is raised by somebody else. The original opportunity, which Mr. Kloman saw, to mount a counter-attack which would destroy Communist credibility, has not been effectively exploited. The net verdict as seen from State is no victory and no defeat.

FUTURE POSSIBILITIES.

As to State Department plans, Mr. Kloman said that we may instruct the UN delegation to make a stand in the General Assembly pointing to the

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fact that the US, Japan, and the ROK have all agreed to cooperate in a UN investigation pursuant to the GA resolution; but that no answer at all has been received from the Communist side. Then, after a decorous delay, we would issue a strong blast pointing to this Communist silence as further evidence that the whole thing is a gigantic fraud.

In addition, State is seeking an endorsement of the Long Report from a member of the NAS (as noted above).

Mr. Kloman emphasized, however, that in his mind the main question is still not one of refutation but of counter-attack on the "big lie". He doubts, however, whether such a counter-attack is possible in the atmosphere of the UN.

Mr. Kloman suggested that the most powerful propaganda would be a refutation of the ISC report by one or more members of the original Communist commission. If this were impossible, he suggested that an embarrassing questionnaire, pointed at the most flagrant lies in the report, could be sent to the members of the commission under appropriate auspices and their failure to answer could be exploited. (Mr. Sneider noted that the latter stunt was carried out with some effect in press conferences with the commission members shortly after their return from China.)

Dr. Craig mentioned the idea of getting Dr. Conway Zirkle, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Pennsylvania and author of "Soviet Science" to assist in a full-fledged review of the ISC report.

It was noted in the discussion that CIA possesses some information about Soviet activity in the BW field. This might be useful.

Mr. Kloman observed that US policy, while favoring the proposal for an on-the-spot investigation, does not favor an actual investigation. One reason for this, he said, is the feeling of the military that an investigating commission would inevitably come across 8th Army preparations or operations (e.g. chemical warfare) which, if revealed, could do us psychological as well as military damage. This reasoning assumes that the commission would have authority to examine anything they liked on either side of the battle line.

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